



February 3, 2022

Re: YES ON HB 4006, Simply time for Fair Pay.

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is Amanda Watters and I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND and ask you to please support HB 4006.

I have been drawn to working with children with developmental disabilities since a young age, and feel honored to be able to bring my knowledge and training in naturopathic medicine to serve this population. It was a long road to get here, including 4 years of naturopathic medical school followed by 3 years of an accredited residency. After completing residency, I worked in a pediatric primary care setting with MD's, DO's, and NP's. At this clinic I was constantly faced with challenges regarding insurance coverage and reimbursement for my work despite performing the same services as my colleagues, and frequently spending more time with my patients given that I requested many of the more medically complex cases. Some insurance companies didn't want to cover my services at all, and others attempted to classify me as an "alternative care provider" along with massage therapists and other similar healing professionals, despite the fact that my license in Oregon allows me to function as a primary care physician. The insurance barriers made it impossible for me to be in-network for many patients.

I decided to leave the primary care world about 2 years ago and stepped into a more administrative role - one which allowed me to still serve children with developmental and behavioral challenges, but which also allowed me to have a more consistent income than was not dependent on the unreliable and insufficient reimbursement from insurance companies. I am currently the Executive Director of Neurotherapeutic Pediatric Therapies, a non-profit organization that provides physical, occupational, speech, and mental health therapy services to children with special needs. I also provide medical care to children in our program along with one other naturopathic doctor, and although our waitlist is long, it simply doesn't make financial sense to bring on another ND given the constraints of insurance. Given that we are a non-profit, we fortunately have a scholarship fund to help cover the cost of care for some families who can't afford our services, but depending on donors to fund care for low income families simply doesn't make sense, when it's the insurance companies who need to start paying fairly.

If you represent families in Clackamas, Washington, Multnomah, Yamhill, or Jackson counties, know that families of kids with disabilities in your district are accessing care at the clinics I run, and **I urge you to vote YES on HB 4006 in order to create more fair and equitable access to healthcare for the families in your community.**

Yours in health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Watters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Amanda Watters, ND
Interim Executive Director
Pronouns: she/her/hers

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